

Claims:

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

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1. A system for managing the use of resources in a system where a remote client uses resources at a server for a limited duration, the system comprising:

a stored listing of at least one resource being used at the server and the client using that resource;

10 a system which identifies that a remote client is no longer using resources at the server;

and

in response to the system identifying that the client is no longer using resources at the server, a mechanism which removes the resources which had been used by the client when the client was connected to the server, whereby the resources being used by a client may be used by other clients after the client has disconnected from the server.

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20 2. A system for managing the use of resources in a system including the elements of Claim 1 wherein the system which identifies that a remote client is no longer using a resource at the server includes a mechanism for determining that the client is no longer connected to the server through a data transmission network.

25 3. A system for managing the use of resources in a system including the elements of Claim 1 wherein the system which identifies that a remote client is no longer using a resource at the server includes a system for determining that the program which uses the resource has terminated.

4. A system for managing the use of a resource in a system including the elements of

Claim 1 wherein the server maintains a listing of each of the clients using a resource associated with the server and the resources which are used by the respective client.

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5. A method of controlling the use of resources at a server by clients which are coupled to

the server to use the resources, the steps of the method comprising:

10 identifying a client which is using the server and the resources of the server which are associated with the client;

detecting when the client is no longer using the resources of the server; and

15 in response to the detecting that the client is no longer using resources of the server, releasing the resources at the server which had been associated with the client.

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6. The method of controlling the use of resources at a server by a client including the

20 steps of Claim 5 and further including the step of detecting that the client has become disconnected from the server.

7. The method of controlling the use of resources at a server by a client including the steps of Claim 5 and further including the step of maintaining a list of the resources being used by each client using the server.

5 8. The method of controlling the use of resources at a server by a client including the steps of Claim 5 wherein the method further includes maintaining a list of resources being used by a client, maintaining a record of the time when the use of the resource started and the time when the resource was last used and using the record of at least one of the times to determine whether to release the resource.

10 9. A method of controlling use of a resource at a server by a client, the steps of the method comprising:

when a client requests use of a resource at a server, entering the identity of the client, the resource and the time into a resources used listing;

15 when a client subsequently uses the resource, entering the time of last use of the resource into the resources used listing;

permitting a client to control a resource while the client is connected and using the resource; and

determining whether a client has been using a resource within a predetermined period of time and, if not, releasing the resource.

10. A stored program fixed on a medium for controlling the use of a resource comprising:

a module which stores a list of the resources which are being used by an identified client at a server;

5 a module which determines when the identified client is no longer using resources associated with the server; and

 a module which determines the resources used by the identified client and releases those resources in response to determining that the identified client is no longer using resources associated with the server.

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11. A stored program of the type described in Claim 10 wherein the module for determining that the identified client is no longer using resources includes a mechanism for determining that the client is no longer connected to the server.